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KIANG WEN HAN ON IMPERIALISM

Since the last issue of the Bulletin, your editor has had opportunity to read more carefully the article by Kiang Wen-han reported on there from Tien Feng for February 10, and feels that some sections of it should be quoted in full.

In confirmation of his charge that "The mission board system was a tool of imperialism", Kiang has the following paragraph, indicative of the way in which past history is being combed for evidence against missionaries and mission boards, "The missionaries were all sent by mission boards. In America there is an over-all organization called the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (Old name of our present Division of Foreign Missions. Ed.) Within this organization there is a committee called Committee on Missions and Governments, and this Committee keeps up a close connection with the State Department. From the annual reports of this Conference we learn that this Committee made the following statement about the September 18, 1931 incident in China: 'We have received many telegrams and reports about this matter, many of them first-hand reports, and these we have promptly forwarded to the State Department in Washington.' (1932 Report page 32) It is apparent that those telegrams and reports all came from missionaries, and that their contents were political and not religious."

He goes on to make the charge that even the indigenous sects, such as Little Flock and the Jesus Family, were also agents of imperialism. Then he turns to the ecumenical agencies of the church, and charges that they are all under the domination of American imperialism. "Since World War II American imperialism has used every Christian organization of an international character, and has called together a number of meetings about Southeast Asia, in which Communism is presented as a problem, a threat, or a challenge, so as to conceal the actuality of American imperialist aggression against the whole world. The slogans "World Church" and "Church Unity" are used to get Christians in colonial and semi-colonial countries to be traitors to their own country and be obedient to American imperialism while they mouth such claims as "Christ is the hope of the world", and "The kingdom of God shall overcome the world", and in fact American imperialism is hiding behind these slogans and plotting to seize control of missionary work throughout the world, so that "world-wide Christian influence" might be better organized, and be made over into a tool for their use in world politics."

In support of this last charge he quotes the experience of India, where the number of American missionaries, and especially the amount of American missionary grants, has increased greatly since World War II in comparison with that from other countries. He goes on to point out how militaristic Billy Graham's five-point plan for world peace is. He then refers to the

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incidents involving Suez and Hungary, and charges that both the World Council and the American National Council of Churches were biased in their judgments on these incidents. He quotes a cordial interchange of letters between the Church Councils of Britain and America and concludes, "From this interchange of letters we can see that what American and British churches are interested in is not international justice, but mutual support in injustice."

The last section of the article is entitled What We Must Recognize, and should be quoted in some detail. He says:

"First, according to the facts of history, we cannot but affirm that all the missionaries under Western mission boards are servants of imperialism, and must therefore be considered as imperialistic elements. We do not deny that there are many good Christians in America, who give generously to support the missionary enterprise. But because the mission boards themselves are tools of imperialism, therefore all this money in the hands of these boards becomes only an instrument of aggression. The reactionary nature of the mission boards has also its negative aspect, and that is that any missionary who does not accept the political point of view of the mission boards will be persecuted and finally dismissed, as for example happened to James Endicott. We also cannot forget that the missionaries who withdrew from China before and after Liberation are many of them continuing to work against us and belittle us, instead of considering that we are brethren together in the Lord and so having sympathy with us. They say that we have 'compromised' or 'sold out', that we are 'ungrateful', that we 'lack theology', that our faith has been perverted, that we are 'living under repression', that we have 'only a limited freedom', etc. Their concern is not with religion but with politics.

"Among our brethren there still remains a mistaken point of view about the missionaries. They say, 'It is true that the missionaries were imperialist elements, but actually they did bring us the Gospel, so that we may apply to them the words of Paul, Whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.' The postman who brings a letter may be a bad man, but if the letter he brings is a good letter, that is the important thing. But according to this way of thinking, it is not imperialism that uses Christianity, but Christianity that uses imperialism. Is that not a monstrous supposition? When Judas betrayed his Lord, could he dare say that God had used him to fulfil His plan for the salvation of mankind? And again, if the postman is a bad man, you cannot be sure that he will deliver the letter. Then there are some who in the past have received small favors from missionaries, which they remember with gratitude. But I answer that justice is more important than personal favors. Will you because of some small personal favor you have received forget the aggression and injustice which your whole nation has suffered?

"Secondly, we must recognize that all international Christian organizations today are in finances, personnel and policy under the control and influence of American imperialism, and therefore are anti-Communist, anti-Russian, and hostile to New China." He goes on to support this charge by referring to the "reactionary attitude of the World Council of Churches" as shown in its pronouncements on Hungary, and by citing the YMCA invitation to Taipei to participate in the centennial meeting in Paris in 1955, pointing out that in that meeting the Nationalist flag was displayed and the Chinese Communist flag taken down, and in the program Communism was expressly condemned.

A third example is the World Lutheran Federation, and of this he says, "In the summer of 1957, the World Lutheran Federation met in America. In the preparation they wrote to the Chinese Lutheran Church inviting it to participate. But in the letter they called Chairman Yu Yuin 'Acting Chairman', and indicated that the Chinese delegates would only be fraternal delegates, or visitors. Is that not an expression of American politics? Is there any respect for the Chinese Lutheran Church in that letter?"

The study session in Peking at which this speech was made last November had shown that there was still a great deal of "rightist" thought within the church, and so he concludes his speech with these words: "We must continue to expose those rightists who are willing to be running dogs for imperialism, and who wearing the cloak of religion attack the Communist Party and socialism. Then too we must continue to reform ourselves, and in our thinking and our affections root out every vestige of imperialism."

On November 26 of last year a delegation of four Chinese churchmen - Episcopal Bishop K. H. Ting, Lutheran Ch'en Chien-hsun, YM Secretary Huang P'ei-yung, and Tien Feng editor Shen Teh-yung - left Peking for a month's visit to Hungary. They arrived in Moscow that same afternoon, after an eight or nine hours' flight, and the next day flew to Budapest. Bishop Ting reports on the visit in the February 10 Tien Feng.

He says, "As we looked down on Budapest from the air, we could not help but think of the dark days a year ago, when the imperialists were carrying on their counter-revolutionary activities. In those days, as we Chinese read the papers, our hearts were very sad, and we asked ourselves, 'Can it be true that Hungary is leaving the socialist family of nations?' But then when the workers' and farmers' revolutionary government was re-established, and Hungary with the help of Soviet Russia was able to suppress so quickly this counter-revolutionary revolt, our hearts were made peaceful again. Looking down from the air, I could not help but think of Luke 15, 'This your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found, therefore let us make merry and be glad.'" (I must confess that the use of this quotation seemed blasphemous to your editor, though probably if it were used in reverse circumstances it would not seem so to us.)

When they landed they were given a cordial reception, which leads the bishop to comment on the warm feeling of unity that exists among socialist nations. He found that there had been much comment in Hungary over two editorials in the People's Daily of Peking on "The Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and over Chairman Mao's statement on the treatment of contradictions within the ranks of the people. People told him that they had found these theoretical discussions very helpful.

He reviews briefly the economic history of Hungary and its progress under a Communist government, and then says, "Our righteous and merciful God is not indifferent to the oppression and slavery which the people of the world have suffered. Can He then care nothing about the great changes that are taking place under socialist governments? Certainly not. We know that in the parable the priest and Levite may have been zealous in temple worship, but when they saw a man wounded by the roadside they paid no attention to his groans but passed by on the other side. But God is not like them. He is the ruler of heaven and earth, and Christ is the Lord of the whole world. The affairs of socialism are certainly not outside the providence of his great God who is Lord of history."

He recognizes that some of the students and the intellectuals of the country are more interested in the present standard of living than in future growth, that they listen to the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe, and long for democratic freedom. But he bids them remember that the restoration they are thinking of would be a restoration of injustice and inequality.

Some people think that the revolt of 1956 was due to the mistakes of a socialist government. But a Hungarian bishop told him, "That is not true. The counter-revolution was just created by counter-revolutionary elements." Bishop Ting adds, "We agree with this. If there are mistakes and shortcomings in socialist construction, let us earnestly strive to correct these, but why on that account reject socialism and turn to a fascist form of government." In fact, he says, in the days immediately before the revolt conditions were improving so rapidly in Hungary that the counter-revolutionaries had to rush their plans in order to get the revolt started before all their talking points had been taken away!

This leads the bishop to a discussion of freedom. "Freedom is a noble thing," - but, it must not be confused with licence. "The Lord Jesus said, 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' And Paul more than once rebuked selfish freedom, and pointed out that freedom should be used for edification. He warned us not to use freedom as an occasion to give the flesh, or make it a stumbling-block to the weak. Thus we can see that freedom and discipline must be combined. St. Augustine said that that discipline which keeps a man from making mistakes must be considered man's true happiness. In short, freedom (tzu-yu) is not licence (yu-tzu - turning the words around), it does not consist just in doing what you want to do. And today, in a country where the People rule, freedom consists in discipline and self-control. The more you make a contribution to the building up of your country the freer you are. Hegel in his philosophy of Religion said, 'Freedom is a demand upon oneself and not upon others.' We need

this attitude of seeking freedom within ourselves."

Shen Teh-yung also reports his impressions of Hungary. His two articles constitute more of an objective description of the Christian church as he found it there. The majesty of an age-old church makes a definite appeal to this representative of a younger church, and he manages to make his readers aware that they as Christians are part of a movement with a glorious history.

RIGHTISTS IN HUNAN

Three of the most outstanding Christian leaders in Hunan have been denounced as rightists. They are Li Yung-wu, CCC pastor in Changsha, Li Ch'ang-shu, Chairman of the Hunan District of the English Methodist Church (Shun-li hui) and Yu Yuin, Chairman of the Lutheran Church in China. We reported the fact of their denunciation in the July Bulletin, but we now have read some of the articles in which the charges against them are detailed.

Li Yung-wu is a comparatively young man. He studied in the West China Theological College during the war years, then went to college and got his B.A. degree, and came to Nanking Theological Seminary for his B.D. degree. He made a brilliant scholastic record (I taught him both in West China and in Nanking) and was offered an opportunity to go abroad to study in preparation for being a seminary professor, but he refused it saying that he felt called to the ministry of the local parish. And so he returned to his native province and became pastor of a church in Changsha.

The April 21 Tien Feng has two articles condemning him as a rightist. The more general article, by Tseng Hwei-sung, describes Li's influence with students in Changsha in these terms: "Rightist Li Yung-wu, in order to accomplish his secret design of poisoning the minds of youth first ensnares them with fair words, and then proceeds to undermine their thinking. For example, when young boys and girls first arrive at school in Changsha, the hypocritical Li Yung-wu pretends to be interested only in their welfare, and oilily says to them, 'Brothers and sisters, are you homesick on having just come to this city? I hope you will consider our church fellowship as your home, and if you have any problems in your school work, come and talk them over with me.' On the face of it, it looks as though Li Yung-wu had a very kind regard for young people, but really his smile conceals a dagger, that was his way of killing people without shedding blood."

The writer recognizes that Li Yung-wu had begun to have a nationwide influence. "For example I was in a young people's fellowship meeting in Chengtu, where they held a prayer meeting in response to the inspiration they received from Changsha. Some of them said, 'May God bless the brothers and sisters in Changsha, and strengthen them to fight courageously against the devil (meaning the government), and some of them even said, 'We must likewise strengthen our spirits to fight against the devil (also meaning the government).'"

Other instances of his influence are given, and the writer concludes by saying, "We used to think of him as a high-minded pastor and spiritual leader, but today we have stripped off his cloak of religion, and his 'spiritual' pretence, and find that he is, as Christ said, a wolf in sheep's clothing."

Teng Lien-fang's article attacking Methodist pastor Li Chang-shu is in the same general vein. He charges that Li Chang-shu opposes the leadership of the Communist Party, opposes socialism, and denies the accomplishments of the religious policy of the government. In his final apostrophe he says, "In short, Li Chang-shu, your scheming was all wrong. You thought that as Chairman of the Three Self Movement in Hunan, and Chairman of the Methodist Church in Hunan you would be able to deceive the People's deputies and the government, and that wearing the cloak of religion and patriotism you would be able to deceive your fellow-workers in the church and entice them to follow you in your opposition to the Party, the People's Government and Socialism. We tell you, your plot has been uncovered and smashed by the People; you could not deceive the People."

The onus of the charge against Lutheran pastor Yu Yuin (Note in the Kiang Wen-han article that Yu Yuin is cited as national chairman) is that he denies that there has been progress under the Communists. The criticism "Chin pu ju hsi" (Today not as good as yesterday) seems to be very widespread among those condemned as rightists, and the whole article against Yu Yuin is devoted to the attempt to disprove it. Yu Yuin had ridiculed the government claim that they were now producing 800 pounds of rice per mou, stating that instead the per mou production had gone down. The writer quotes figures from his own locality to prove that the government's claims are justified.

MISSIONARY NEWS

Died: Dr. Lucius C. Porter, American Board missionary long connected with Yenching University in Peking, on September 8.